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DEPT FOR AF/E AND A/S FRAZER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/11/2017

TAGS: PGOV PREL ASEC PTER SO ET

SUBJECT: Somalia -- Delay in Reconciliation Congress

REF: A) Nairobi 2409 B) Nairobi 2408

Classified by PolOff Mitch Benedict for reasons 1.4 (b,d)

¶1. (C) Ali Mahdi, Chairman of the National Governance and Reconciliation Committee (NGRC) told the Ambassador on June 10 that the kickoff for the National Reconciliation Congress (NRC), planned to begin on June 14, has been delayed by two weeks. Mahdi said the delay was inevitable because much remained to be done with regard to preparations of the venue, publicity materials, selection of delegates and their travel to Mogadishu, and other logistical arrangements.

¶2. (C) As reported in Ref B, all indications were pointing toward a delay. A new date has not been announced, nor has Mahdi publicly announced the delay. Michael Chelius, Technical Advisor for the NRC at UNDP, commented that a three week delay is more realistic, but the NGRC was unlikely to set a firm date for the NRC opening ceremony too much in advance. On June 11 we spoke with a member of the NGRC who told us he had no knowledge of the delay. We will continue to provide regular reporting on developments relating to the planning and preparations for the NRC.

RANNEBERGER